[Prof. Savithri Lakshmanan]

provided as immediate relief to the sufferers. Free rations have been supplied, *ex-gratia* payments have been given to the badly affected persons.

The Calamity Relief Fund of Rs. 31 crores, allocated in the current Kerala Budget is not sufficient to meet the whole demand. An amount of Rs. 75 to Rs. 100 crores is urgently required by the Kerala Government to meet their demands.

I would urge upon the Government of India to constitute an independent authority to assess the total damages and grant the aid as Central assistance immediately to Kerala Government.

(iv) Need to declare Kota, Rajasthan as a 'B' grade city

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to the following matter under Rule 377.

Despite all endeavours, the industrial capital of Rajasthan, Kota has not been declared as a 'B' grade city, although many cities which have a lesser population than that of Kota have been granted that status. Kota city is fully eligible for that status, as per the criteria laid down by the Union Government. Besides it, the population of Kota city during the last ten years has increased more than any other city of the state. On the basis of population also Kota is eligible for granting 'B' grade city status. Moreover, important industrial units and scientific institutions, including an Atomic Power Project, Railway Wagon workshop a heavy water plant and NTPC power station, are located there. Therefore, the Government should declare Kota, as a 'B' grade city, without any delay.

(v) Need to re-introduce air service from Surat to Bhavnagar—Delhi etc.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA (Surat): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the following matter, under Rule 377.

"For the past many years, the Vayudoot service on the Bombay-Surat-Daman and Bhavnagar route was functioning quite smoothly and the airline used to earn a sizable profit also. Lakhs of people belonging to Saurashtra are settled in Surat and thousands of people involved in diamond business, regularly go to Bhavnagar from Surat. There was also a demand to increase the frequency of this service from thrice a week to a daily service. However, two-and a half months back, Vayudoot suspended this service without even informing the public.

Similarly, about eight months back, a regular air service from Surat to Delhi via Udaipur was also introduced. Lakhs of businessmen and other employees from North India are settled in Surat and they regularly visit Delhi. This was the reason which prompted the introduction of this service. People from all walks of life praised the introduction of this service and Vayudoot was earning a fat revenue from this service, but about two and a half months back, even this service was suspended.

In terms of population and industries, Surat is the most prominent and important city of Gujarat. It has a population of more than twenty lakhs and the city is famous for its diamond industry, artsilk cloth and Zari (embroidery) work. Therefore, it is very much important and necessary to have air services between Surat and Bhavnagar and Surat and Delhi. Not only this, the Surat (Magdala) airport should be expanded and developed as a national level airport.

Therefore, I request the Government to conduct an inquiry to find out the people responsible for the suspension of the air services on the Surat-Delhi and Surat-Bhavnagar routes, the closure of the Magdala airport and the shifting and transfer of all machinery and staff to Jamnagar and